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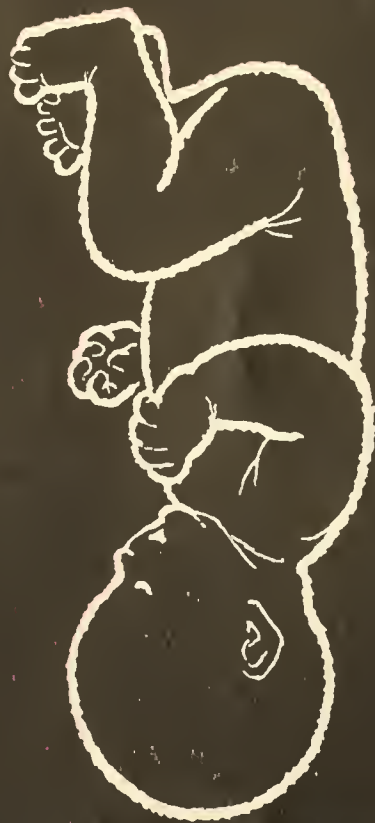
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
Social Security Administration  
Children's Bureau

your  
baby's  
first  
year



This short, picture-leaflet on the care of a baby for his first year of life is designed for quick reading and covers the most important points in good baby care. More detailed information can be found in the Children's Bureau publication *Infant Care* (Publication No. 8).

*Katherine B. Oettinger*  
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Chief, Children's Bureau

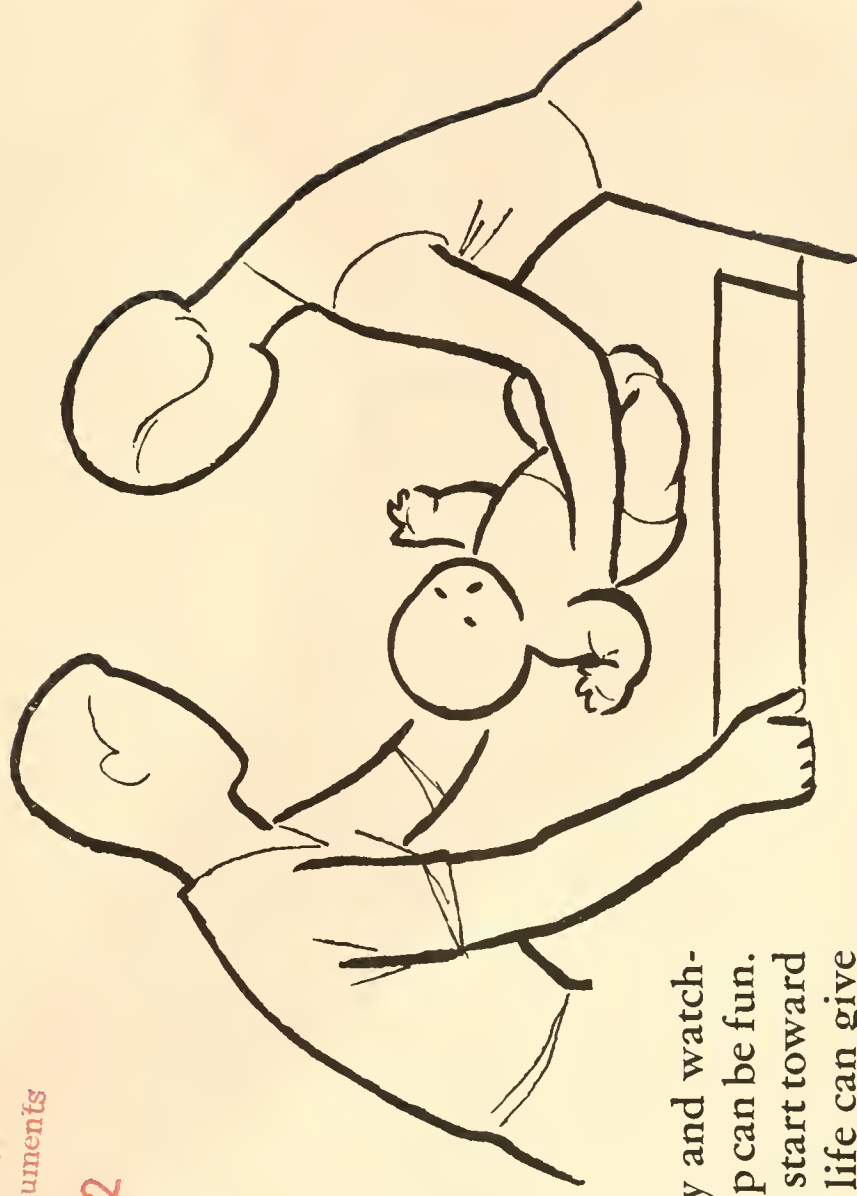
*When Your Baby Is On the Way*—Children's Bureau Publication No. 391—a short, picture leaflet on the care of the mother before the baby is born, can be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., for 15 cents a copy.

your baby's first year

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Taking care of your baby and watching him grow and develop can be fun. Getting him off to a good start toward a healthy, happy, useful life can give you much satisfaction and joy.





# what a newborn baby is like

A new baby may be red and wrinkled. His head may seem out of shape or he may seem bowlegged. All that won't last long.

He will have a soft spot on top of his head at birth. It will close by the time he is a year or 18 months old. It's safe to wash his head from the very first.

Your baby may jump at a loud noise. All babies do. Soon, however, that will not bother him. His breathing may be fast or slow or jerky and he may make little sounds in his sleep. These do not last long.

your  
baby  
is very  
special

He will grow in his very own way at his very own rate. Enjoy him for what he is. Don't feel he should be like another baby.



## expect some crying

It's your baby's way of saying something is wrong. So pay attention to his cries. After a time, you can tell what is the matter. Is he tired? Wet? Hungry? Does he want to be cuddled? Most babies stop crying when their needs are met.

You may think you don't know how to care for a baby. Most parents feel that way at first. But just trust your common sense. Each day you will learn more and more.

## your doctor is there to

Have him examine your baby at set times. He will tell you how often. That will give your baby a better chance to keep well. When you have a question about your baby's health, your doctor is the one to ask. The public health nurse may be helpful in carrying out his orders.

help you



mothers need  
to keep up  
their own health

What you eat is as important now as it was before your baby arrived. You also need to get plenty of sleep, rest, exercise, recreation. If not, you won't feel like taking care of your baby and family.

a baby needs both parents

At first he depends most on his mother. But his father is important, too. Each father has his own way of being important—which is more than paying bills. One may help to take care of the baby. One may help with some of the mother's other tasks. One may just talk to or hold the baby. There are many ways.

your baby  
wants to  
be loved

Even when very little,  
your baby needs love.  
He needs that as he needs  
food. Cuddle him while  
you feed him, whether by  
breast or bottle. Talk to  
him.

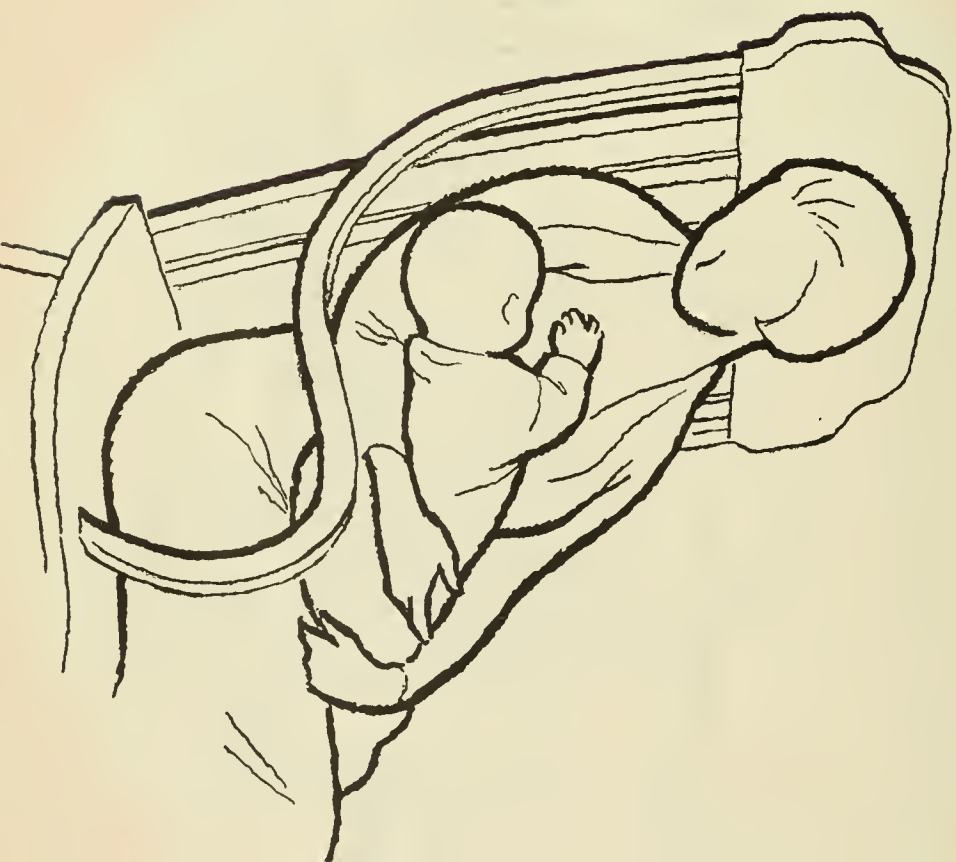
At other times, not only  
when he is crying, both  
of you pat him. Pick him  
up. Play with him. All  
that makes him know he  
is loved.



Being fed does more than satisfy your baby's hunger. It makes him feel content and happy. It also can be a pleasant time for you and a time to rest. Get comfortable and relax.

## his first food is milk

During the first month, he may need to be fed every 3 or 4 hours, more or less. After that, he will begin to settle down to fairly regular feeding times.



After feeding your baby, hold him next to your shoulder or on your lap and pat him on his back. That gets rid of the air that he swallows. Many mothers do this 2 or 3 times during a feeding.

He may need some water, too, especially in warm weather. Offer some cool, boiled water several times a day. Don't worry, though, if he doesn't drink it. Some babies never take water when they are getting enough fluid in their milk feedings.



## vitamins C and D

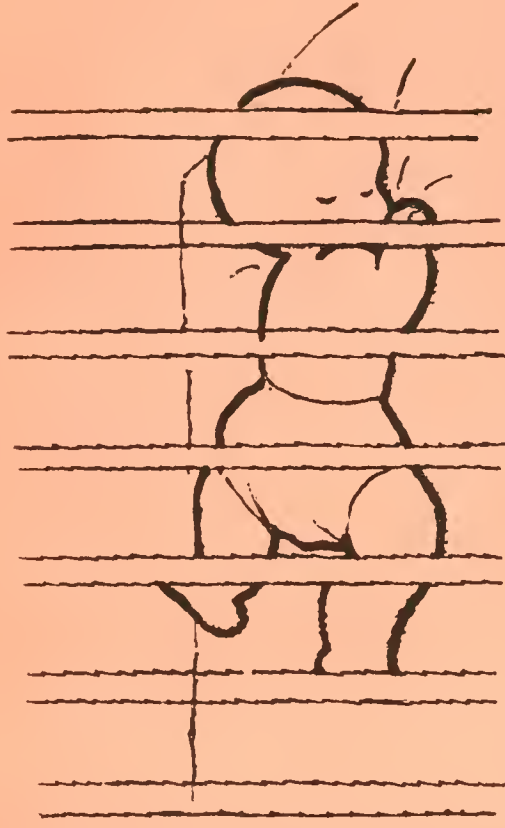
Your baby needs some vitamins C and D every day. Ask your doctor how much and in what way he is to get them.

### Fruit juice for vitamin C

Fruit juice, usually orange, is a good way to give vitamin C. Start with 1 teaspoon of strained juice a day. Mix it with a teaspoon of cool, boiled water. As your baby grows, add more juice. Plan for him to be getting 4 table-spoons by the time he is 2 months old and 6 by the time he is 8 to 10 months old. Ask your doctor about other juices that will give enough vitamin C.

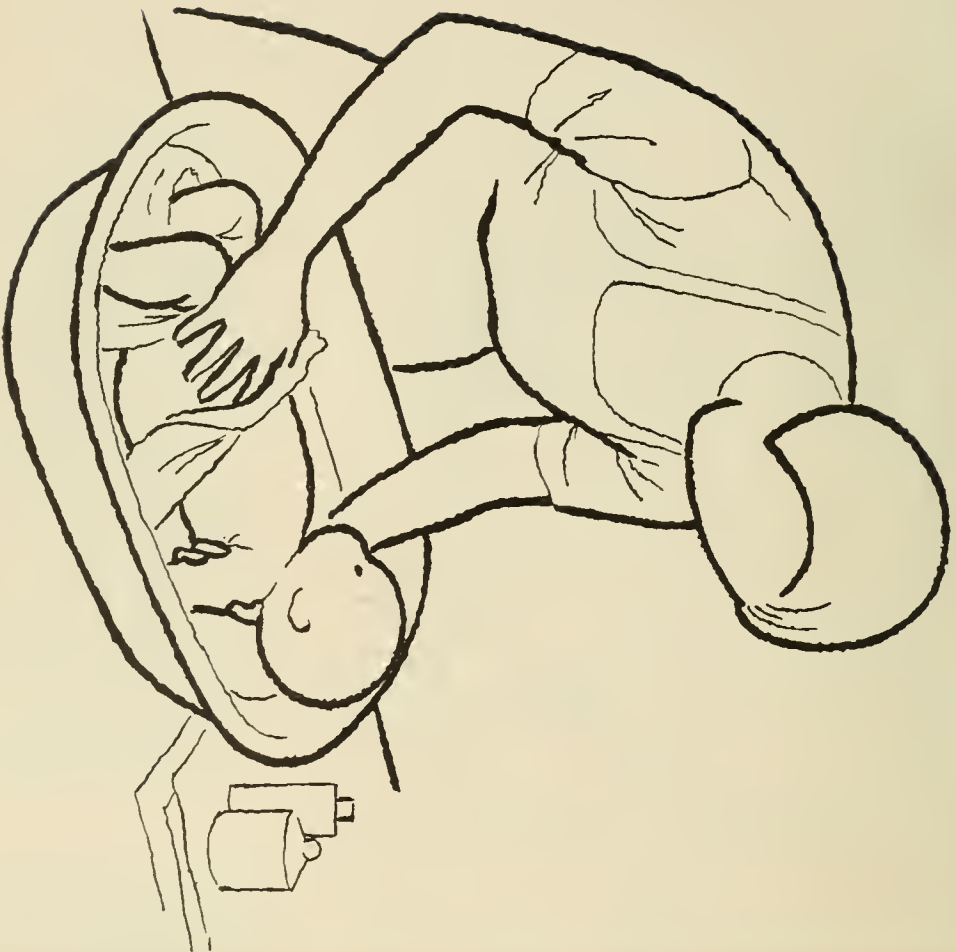


let  
your baby  
sleep  
as long  
as he  
wants to



He will sleep a big part of each day at first. As he grows older, he sleeps less. Let him judge how much. Settle him for sleep in the same place and at about the same

time each day and night. You may want to plan his day so he will be awake some after his father gets home. In that way, they can get to know each other better.

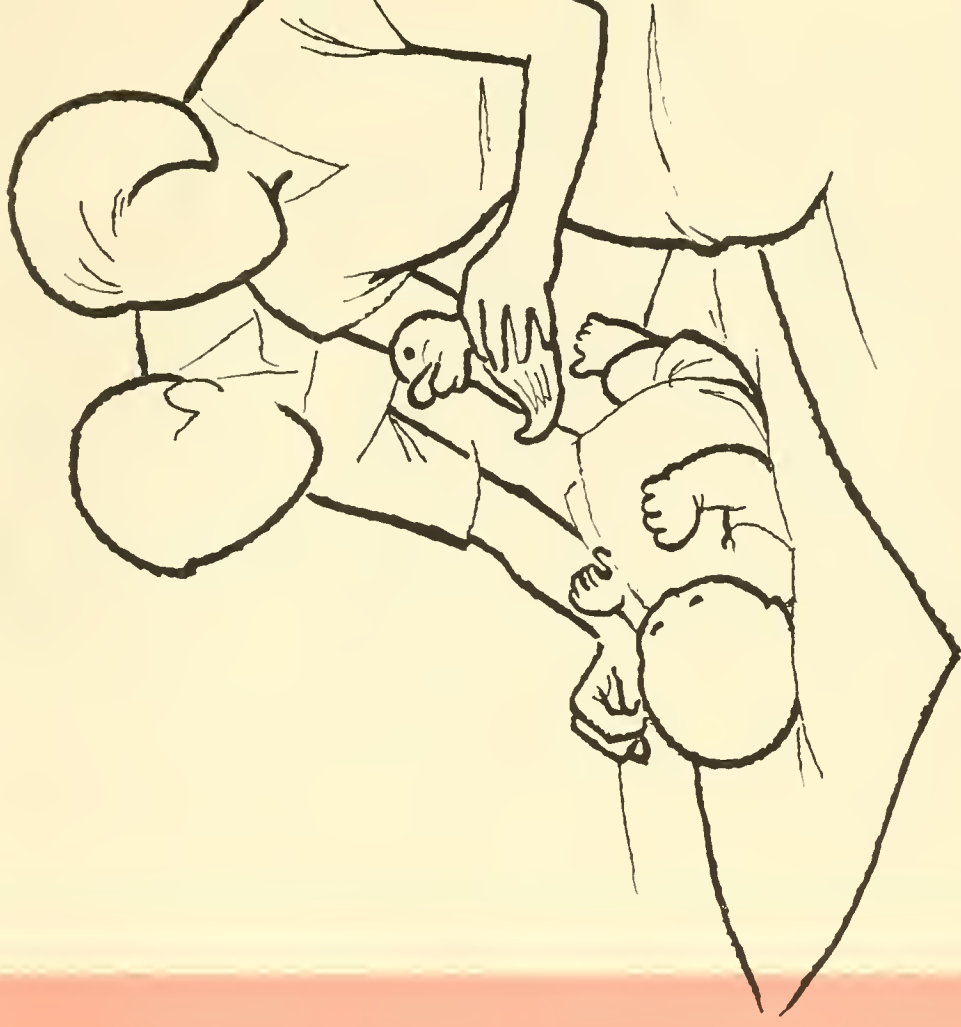


## bath time can be fun time

Pick a time that suits you and a place away from drafts. At first, all you need is a blanket (or a towel) on a table, a washcloth, soap, warm water, and a towel. Later on, a tub may be best. **NEVER** leave your baby alone in his bath or on the bath table—**NOT EVEN FOR ONE SECOND.**

## play is a baby's way of learning

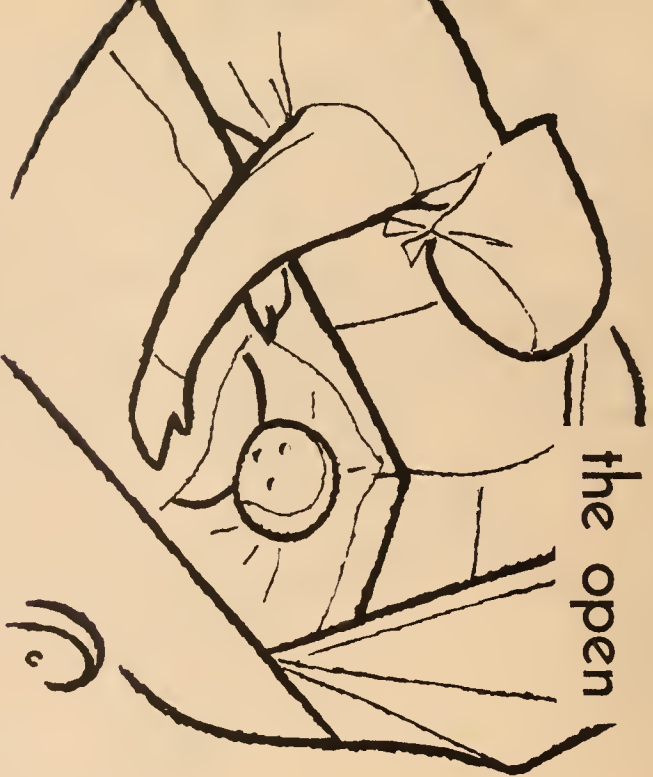
When a baby plays, he uses his eyes, mouth, hands, and whole body. Let him have many chances to play. Give him a tin cup, a wooden clothespin, a spool on a looped string, and so on—but not anything sharp, pointed, or small. Best of all, your baby loves to play with you—his parents.



get  
your baby

out in

the open



He will like fresh air and sun-  
shine. Dress him to fit the  
weather. Protect him from  
heat, cold, wind, and too much  
sun.

get your baby



A shirt, a diaper, maybe a loose  
gown, can do for a while.  
Clothes that can be washed but  
do not need to be ironed will



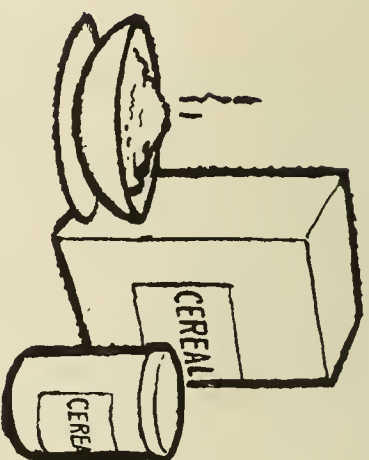
save time and energy. Have them big enough so he can use his body freely. When he begins to crawl, get tough clothes.



Most mothers dress their baby too warmly. Feel his hands, feet, and body to test if he is too hot or cold.

## solid foods

Your doctor will tell you when to start on solid foods. Usually this will be when he is 2 or 3 months old. He may start with cereals, vegetables, or fruits. Taking food from a spoon and swallowing it is new for him. Begin with only a little bit on the tip of a spoon and let him suck it off. He may need a little time to get used to the feel and taste of it. Give him only one new food at a time.



## cereals

Use cereals such as enriched cream of wheat, strained oatmeal, or cereals prepared for babies. Thin it with a little of the baby's formula or boiled water. Begin with about a teaspoon once a day. Gradually add a little until he is getting 2 to 5 tablespoons once or twice a day when he is 6 to 7 months old.



## fruits

Fix them yourself by cooking and straining, or use fruits canned for babies. Strained peaches, apricots, prunes, and applesauce are commonly used for babies. You may also use mashed ripe bananas. Ask your doctor about other fruits.



## vegetables

Fix them yourself by cooking and straining, or use vegetables canned for babies. Babies usually like mild flavored ones, such as green beans, carrots, and green peas. Strained dark green and deep yellow vegetables—like spinach and squash—are good. Ask your doctor about others.





## egg yolk, meats, fish

Egg yolk (hard boiled or in custard) is sometimes begun at about 3 to 5 months. Start with only a very little (about  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon), adding until he gets all of the yolk. Meat canned for babies or scraped or finely ground meats may be given before the baby

has teeth. Begin with a little and add slowly until he is getting about 2 table-spoons a feeding. When he is about a year old, fish may be added. Bake, steam, or poach it or use canned tuna. Be sure to pick it apart to get out all bones.



## take your time with weaning

Breast-fed babies can be weaned directly and gradually to a cup after about 6 months old. Bottle-fed babies usually like to suck the bottle a little longer.

Begin by offering your baby a little milk or fruit juice in a cup. When he gets used to that way of taking food, begin giving him a cup feeding instead of one of his breast or bottle feedings.



## chopped foods

By the end of the first year, your baby should have changed from strained and finely ground foods to mashed or chopped ones.

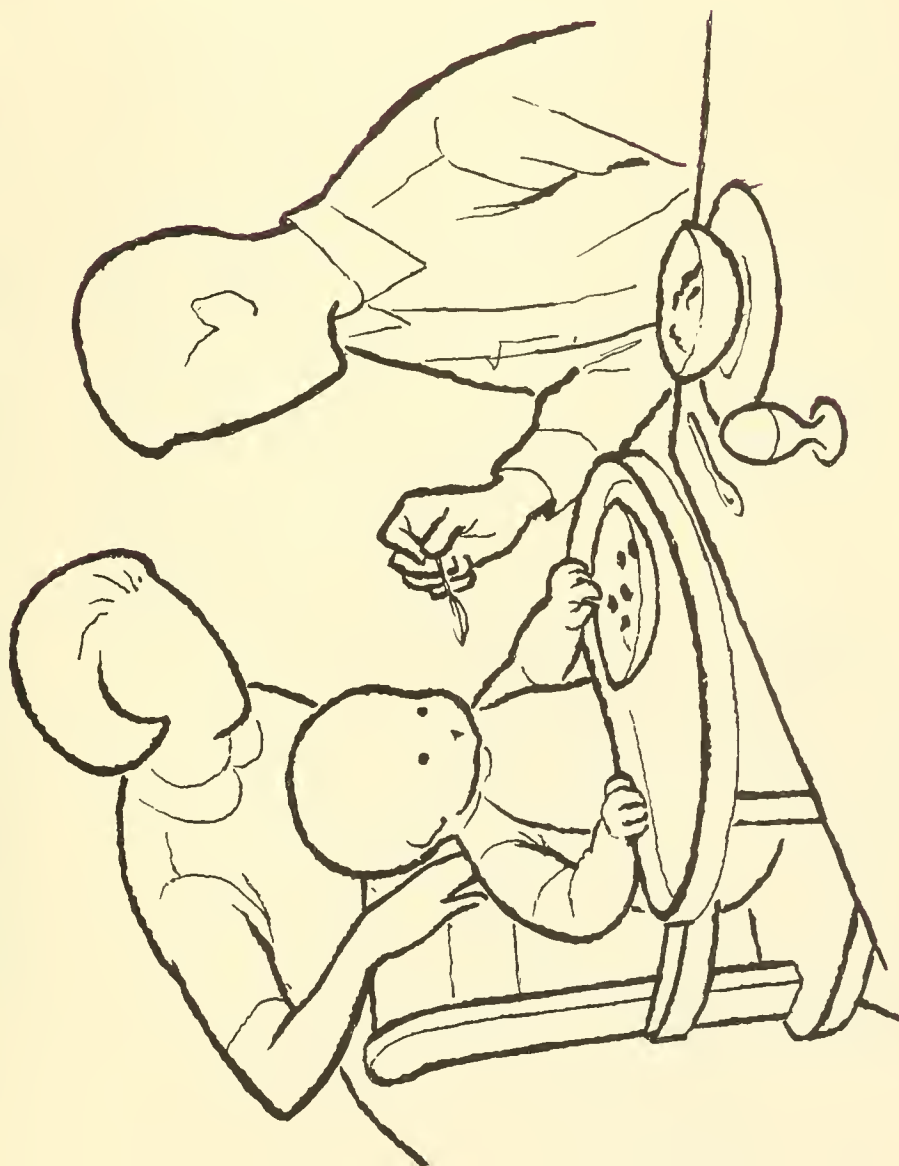
Also, he should be enjoying milk, many kinds of fruits, vegetables and cereals, as well as eggs, meat and fish. By then, most of the time, he will be on

three meals a day, plus snacks. Some of his food—if not all—may come from the family table.

To help your baby learn to feed himself, offer him food he can eat with his fingers, such as pieces of banana, diced cooked carrots, or chopped cooked meat.

# baby's food

As your baby  
grows, your  
doctor will tell  
you what foods  
your baby  
needs, when  
to start them,  
and how much  
to give.

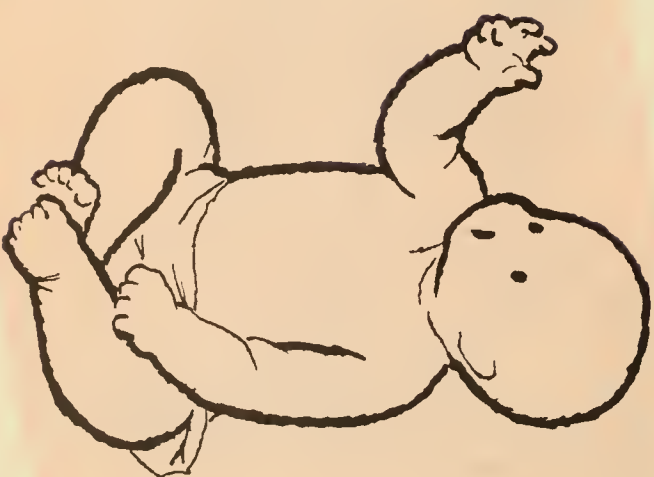


## notice how your baby grows and develops

Remember he is following his very own timetable. That may not be like the one below at all.

Babies begin to make sounds as soon as they are born. They begin to babble at about 1½ to 2 months of age.

They may reach out and grab an object around 3 to 5 months and about the same time begin to laugh out loud.



stomach usually around 5 to 7 months.

Near that time, they may begin to get choosy about whom they will reach out to. They like their mother best then.

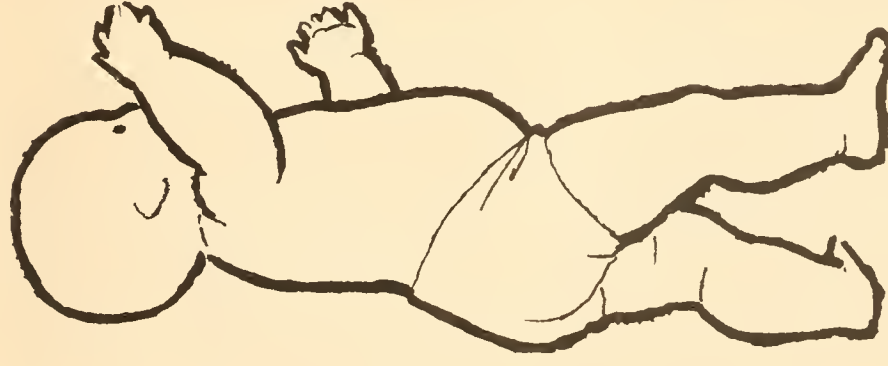
They sit up between 6 to 8 months of age.

Crawling starts between 7 to 9 months. Some babies never crawl, but find other ways of getting across the floor.

They pull themselves up to standing at about 9 to 10 months.

They stand alone and walk anywhere from 9 to 15 months.

They may use a word or two before they walk.



## sicknesses

Some start slowly. On a regular visit to the doctor, he may see signs of a sickness that you missed.

Other sicknesses start quickly—in an hour or two.

If you think that your baby is sick or getting sick, call your doctor at once.

## signs of sickness

Changes in the way your baby acts may mean that he is becoming sick.

If he is cross when most of the time he is happy and playful.

Wakes often and cries when he usually sleeps well.

Becomes drowsy and loses interest in play when he usually plays.

Refuses more than one feeding in succession.

Has a hot and dry skin.

Vomits—not just spitting up food which all babies do at times.

Bowel movements are loose and watery, or change color or increase in number.

Coughs, is hoarse, or nose runs.

Cries as if in pain.

Breaks out in rash.

Arms, legs, face jerk or twitch.

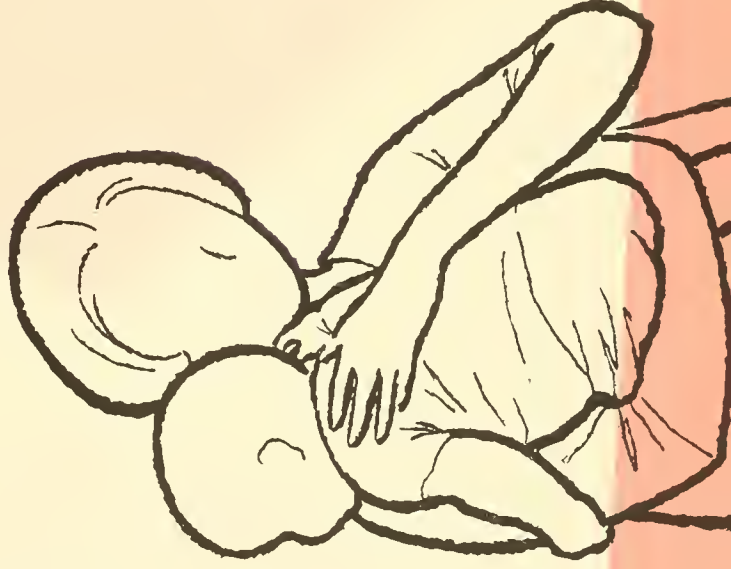
Neck is stiff.

Pulls at one or both ears.

# to protect your baby

from serious  
sicknesses like  
polio, diphtheria,  
smallpox,  
whooping cough,  
lockjaw. Talk  
to your doctor  
about this.

*Begin shots early  
so all will be  
given some time  
before your baby's  
first birthday.*





## your baby's teeth

Most babies get their first teeth at about 6 months of age. Many have about 6 teeth by the end of the first year. When cutting his teeth, your baby may lose his appetite for a short time. Though he may cry in pain, cutting teeth does not usually cause fever. Let him chew on a rough surface, such as toast, or a hard teething ring. That will ease him some.

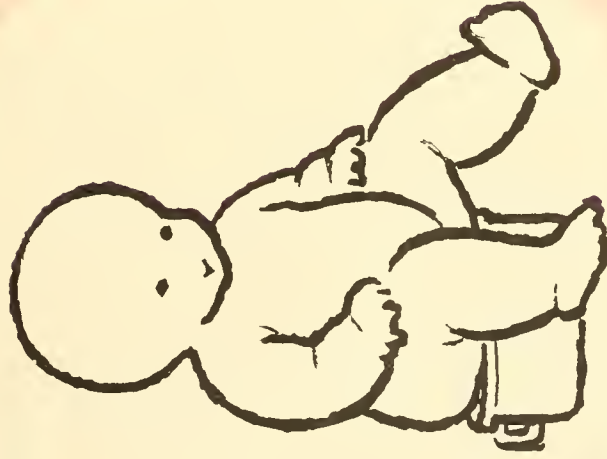




## go slow on toilet training

Toilet training works out best if you don't rush it. Babies get trained sooner if they set their own pace. Most babies do not learn until 1½ to 2 years old. Then they are better able to control their bowels.

Keeping dry, night and day, takes longer. That may not be for 2½ to 3 years.



## when he gets on the move

Your baby learns by picking up and examining things. When a parent grabs something from a baby, it may scare or upset him. Instead, find some safe or less valuable thing to trade with him. Or better, put away things that may hurt him or that he may break. If you use a playpen, give him several periods each day to roam around outside it.

## keep home safe for baby

Remove from his reach such things as medicines, household cleaners, hanging tablecloths, electric cords, beads, tiny toys, coins, pins, plastic bags, scissors, knives.

Cover all electric outlets and repair frayed lamp cords.



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Sometimes it may seem that this first year is only dirty diapers, extra work, lack of sleep, the same things again and again.

There is a great deal of that. But brightening your memory are your baby's coos, his smiles and laughs, his first step, and knowing that you are giving your boy or girl a good start for a full and joyful life.

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